

REMARKS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to better conform with the formal requirements of U.S. practice and to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Prior to this Amendment "B", claims 1-22 were pending in the present application. In this Amendment "B", claims 1, 10, 12 and 20 have been amended and claims 2 and 11 have been canceled. Accordingly, after this Amendment "B" claims 1, 3-10 and 12-22 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the present application in its current format is hereby respectfully requested.

In the Office action, the Examiner finds that claim 5 does not read on the elected Species A (Fig. 4) and has withdrawn claim 5 from consideration. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 does indeed read on elected Species A and respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider his withdrawal of claim 5 from consideration. As shown by the two oppositely-directed arrows disposed on the ends of the route 1 in Fig. 4, the stack support 2 can move either left to right, or right to left. This alternate travel of the stack support 2 in Fig. 4 is described in paragraph [0032] of the specification. Since the stack support 2 in Fig. 4 can move in either direction, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 reads on Species A and should be considered by the Examiner.

The Examiner has objected to the abstract of the disclosure as being too lengthy, i.e., in excess of 150 words. In response, Applicant has amended the abstract to be within the required length.

The Examiner has also objected to claims 10-14, 17 and 20-22 because the recited elements were not separated by line indentations. Independent claim 10 has been presented so as to have such indentations. Applicant believes that this new presentation of independent claim 10 addresses the Examiner's objections.

The Examiner has rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite because of a lack of antecedent basis for the limitation "the traversing zone". Applicant has amended claim 20 to recite "a traversing zone". Applicant believes that this amendment addresses the Examiner's rejection of claim 20 and asserts that claims 1, 3-10 and 12-22 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Notice to that effect is hereby requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-2, 6-7, 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,489,930 to Meier. For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant traverses this rejection.

The Meier patent discloses an apparatus 10 for collecting folded printed sheets 23, 24. Each of the folded sheets 23, 24 has a folded edge and an opposing pair of free edges. The apparatus 10 includes a collecting conveyor 11 and two infeed means 12, 13. The collecting conveyor 11 comprises a series of receiving saddles 17 mounted to a pair of chains 15, 16. As is best shown in Fig. 1, the infeed means 12, 13 have travel paths that initially extend in directions perpendicular to the direction of the collecting conveyor 11 and then curve so as to extend along the collecting conveyor 11 in a parallel manner. *The travel paths of the infeed means 12, 13 never cross or traverse the collecting conveyor 11.* The infeed means 12 includes a series of gripper units 21, while the infeed means 13 includes a series of gripper units 22. The gripper units 21, 22 hold folded edges of the sheets 23, 24, respectively, and move the folded sheets 23, 24 along the travel paths of the infeed

means 12, 13, respectively. Opening devices 25 and 26 open the sheets 23, 24, respectively, at the free edges to permit the sheets 23, 24 to be deposited on the saddles 17 so that each deposited sheet 23, 24 straddles its associated saddle 17, i.e., the associated saddle 17 is disposed between opposing portions of the deposited sheet 23, 24. Obviously, the free edges of the sheets 23, 24 are moved over the saddles 17 first.

In rejecting independent claim 1 over the Meier patent, the Examiner finds that the folded sheets 24 of the Meier patent correspond to the "articles (5)" of claim 1 and that one of the saddles 17 of the Meier patent corresponds to the "stack support (2)" of claim 1. The Examiner further finds that the Meier patent shows "inserting an article between two successive stacks (see Fig. 2) while it is gripped on its leading edge (see Fig. 2)". Claim 1, however, has been amended to clarify that the "leading edges" of the "articles (5)" are "the first portions of the articles (5) to enter between two successive stacks (9) or stack supports (2)". As described above, in the Meier patent, the first portions of the sheets 24 to be disposed over the saddles 17 are the free edges of the sheets 24 and not the folded edges that are held by the gripper units 22. Thus, the Meier patent fails to show or suggest (with emphasis added): "inserting one of the flat articles (5)", "wherein the articles (5) are inserted between two successive stacks (9) or stack supports (2) *while being gripped on their leading edges (5.1)*", as is recited in independent claim 1. For at least this reason, the Meier patent fails to show or suggest independent claim 1.

In rejecting independent claim 10 over the Meier patent, the Examiner finds that the travel path of the collecting conveyor 10 of the Meier patent corresponds to the "gathering route (1)" of claim 10 and that the travel path of the infeed means 13 of the Meier patent corresponds to the "supply route (3)" of claim 10. As set forth

above, however, in the Meier patent, the infeed means 13 never traverses the collecting conveyor 10, as is clearly shown in Fig. 1 of the Meier patent. Thus, the Meier patent fails to show or suggest (with emphasis added): a gathering arrangement having a "supply route (3)" and a "gathering route (1)", "*wherein the supply route (3) traverses the gathering route (1) at the feed station*", as is recited in independent claim 10. For at least this reason, the Meier patent fails to show or suggest independent claim 10.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant submits that the Meier patent fails to show or suggest independent claims 1 and 10. Applicant considers it apparent that the Meier patent also fails to show or suggest claims 3-9 and 12-22 since they all depend from claim 1 or claim 10 and recite additional novel features of the present invention.

The Examiner has rejected claims 10-14, 17, 18, 20 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,706,951 to Leu. For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant traverses this rejection.

The Leu patent discloses an apparatus 10 for collating printed products. The apparatus 10 includes a conveyor along which a series of bins 11 are moved. The conveyor for the bins 11 moves in a direction 12. A pair of infeed conveyors 13, 14 are provided, each of which includes an overhead conveyor 15 moving a series of grippers 16. As is best shown in Fig. 1, the infeed conveyors 13, 14 have looped travel paths, portions of which extend along the conveyor of the bins 11 in a parallel manner. *The travel paths of the infeed conveyors 13, 14 (and the conveyors 15) never cross or traverse the conveyor of the bins 11.*

In rejecting independent claim 10 over the Leu patent, the Examiner finds that the travel path (direction 12) of the conveyor for the bins 11 of the Leu patent

corresponds to the "gathering route (1)" of claim 10 and that the travel path of one of the conveyors 15 of the Leu patent corresponds to the "supply route (3)" of claim 10. As set forth above, however, in the Leu patent, the conveyors 15 never traverse the conveyor for the bins 11, as is clearly shown in Fig. 1 of the Leu patent. Thus, the Leu patent fails to show or suggest (with emphasis added): a gathering arrangement having a "supply route (3)" and a "gathering route (1)", "*wherein the supply route (3) traverses the gathering route (1) at the feed station*", as is recited in independent claim 10. For at least this reason, the Leu patent fails to show or suggest independent claim 10.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant submits that the Leu patent fails to show or suggest independent claim 10. Applicant considers it apparent that the Leu patent also fails to show or suggest claims 12-22 since they all depend from claim 10 and recite additional novel features of the present invention.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 18-0160, our Order No. FRR-12814.

Respectfully submitted,

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